A SOLITARY

It was snowing hard, as it had been for twenty-four hours. The evergreen trees hung low with the snow. Nicholas Gunn's little house was almost hidden beneath it. The snow shelved out over the eaves, and clung in damp masses to the walls. Nicholas sat on his door-step, and the snow fell upon him. His old cap had become a tall white crown; there was a ridge of snow upon his bent shoulders. He sat perfectly still: his eyes were fixed upon the weighted evergreens across the road, but he did not seem to see them. He looked as calmly passive beneath the storm as a Buddhist

. There were no birds stirring and there was no wind. All the sound came from the muffled rustle of the snow on the trees, and that was so slight as to seem scarcely more than a thought of sound. The road stretched to the north and south through the forest of pine, and cedar, and hemlock. Nicholas Gunn's was the only house

in sight. Stephen Forster came up the road from the southward. He bent his head and struggled along; the snow was above his knees, and at every step he lifted his feet painfully, as from a quicksand. He ad-vanced quite noiselessly until he began to cough. The cough was deep and rattling, and he had to stand still in the snow while it was upon him. Nicholas Gunn never looked up. Stephen bent himself almost double, the cough became a strangle, but Nicholas kept his calm eyes fixed upon the

At last Stephen righted himself and kept on. He was very small; his clothes were quite covered with snow, and patches of it clung to his face. He looked like some little winter-starved, white-furred animal, creeping painfully to cover. When he came opposite the house he half halted, but Nicholas never stirred nor looked his way. and he kept on. It was all that he could do to move, the cough had exhausted him; he carried a heavy basket, too.

He had proceeded only a few paces be-

yond the house when his knees bent under him, he fairly sank down into the snow. He greaned a little, but Nicholas did not turn After a little Stephen raised himself,

lifted his basket and went staggering back. "Mr. Gunn," said he. Nicholas turned his eyes slowly and looked at him, but he did not speak. an' rest a few minutes? I'm 'most beat

'No, you can't," replied Nicholas Gunn. "I dunno as I can git home." Nicholas made no rejoinder. He turned his eyes away. Stephen stood looking piteously at him. His sharply-cut delicate face gleamed white through the white fall "If you'd jest let me set there a few min-utes," he said.

Nicholas sat immovable. Stephen tried to walk on, but suddenly another coughing fit seized him. He stumbled across the road and propped himself against a pine tree, setting the basket down in the snow. He twisted himself about the snowy tree trunk, and the coughs came in a rattling volley. Nicholas Gunn looked across at him, and

waited until Stephen got his breath. Then he spoke. "Look a here!" he said. "What say?"

"If you want to set in the house a few ninutes, you can. There ain't no fire

It was some time before Stephen Forster gathered strength enough to return across the road to the house. He leaned against the tree, panting, the tears running down his cheeks. Nicholas did not offer to help him. When, at last, Stephen got across the read, he rose to let him pass through the door; then he sat down again on the door-

Stephen Forster set his basket on the floor and staggered across the room to a chair. He leaned his head back against the wail and panted. The room was bit-terly cold; the snow drifted in through the open door where Nicholas sat. There was no furniture except a cooking-stove, a cot bed, one chair and a table: but there were ornaments. Upon the walls hung various little worsted and card-board decorations. There was a lamp-mat on the table, and in one corner was a rude bracket holding a bouquet of wax-flowers under a tall glass shade. There was also a shelf full of books beside the window.

Stephen Forster did not notice anything. He sat with his eyes closed. Once or twice he tried feebly to brush the snow off his clothes, that was all. Nicholas never turned his head. He looked like a stone image there in the doorway. In about twenty minutes Stephen arose, took his basket up, and went timidly to the door. "I'm much obleeged to ye, Mr. Gunn," said he. "I guess I can git along now."

Nicholas got up, and the snow fell from his shoulders in great cakes. He stood

aside to let Stephen pass. Stephen, out-side the door, paused and looked up at "I'm much obleeged to ye," he said again; "I guess I can git home now. I had them three coughin' spells after I left

the store, and I got 'most beat out." Nicholas grunted and sat down again. Stephen looked at him a minute, then he smiled abashedly and turned away, urging his feeble little boy through the storm. Nicholas watched him, then turned his head with a stiff jerk.

"If he wants to go out in such weather he can. I don't care," he muttered.

It was nearly 4 o'clock in the afternoon, the snow was gradually ceasing. Presently a yellow light could be seen through the in the West. Some birds flew int one of the snowy trees, a wood-sled creaked down the road, the driver stared at Nicholas in the doorway, he turned his head and stared again. It was evident that he was not one of the village people. They had witnessed the peculiarities of Nicholas Gunn for the last six years. They still stared, but not as assiduously. The driver of the wood-sled, as soon as he

went down the slope in the road and could no longer see Nicholas, began to whistle. The whistle floated back like a wake of merry sound. Presently Nicholas arose, took off his cap

and beat it against the door-post to rid it of its dome of snow. Then he shook himself like a dog and stamped. Then he went into the house and stood looking irresolutely at "Should like a fire to heat up my hasty-

puddin' mighty well, so-I won't have it," He took a wooden bucket and went with

it out of doors, around the house over a suow-covered path to a spring. The water trickled into its little basin from under a hood of snow. Nicholas plunged in his bucket, withdrew it filled with water, and carried it back to the bouse. The path led through the woods; all the trees and bushes were white ares. Some of the low branches bowed over the path, and Nicholas, passing under them, had to stoop.

Nicholas, back in his house, got a bowl

ont of a rude closet; it was nearly full of cold hasty-pudding. He stood there and swallowed it in great gulps.

The light was wanining fast, although it lasted longer than usual, on account of the snow, which, now the clouds were gone,

was almost like a sheet of white light. Nicholas, when he had finished his supper, plunged out again into this pale dusk.
He tramped, knee-deep, down the road for a long way. He reached the little village center, left it behind, and went on between white meadow-lands and stretches of woods. Once in a while he met a man plodding down to the store, but there were few people abroad. The road would not be cleared

until morning.

Finally Nicholas turned about and went back until he reached the village store. Its rindows and glass door were full of yellow light, in which one could see many heads moving. When Nicholas opened the clang-ing door and went in all the heads turned toward him. There was hardly a man there as tall as he. He went across the store with a kind of muscular shamble; his head, with its wild, light beard, had a lofty lift to it. The lounging men watched him furtively as he bought some Indian meal and matches at the counter. When he had gone out with his purchases there was a burst of laughter. The store-keeper thrust a small,

sharp face over the counter. "If a man is such a darned fool as to live on meal and matches, I am't got nothing to say, so long as he pays me the money down." said he. He had a hoarse cold and his voice

Was a facetions whisper.

There was another shout of laughter;
Nicholas could hear it as he went down the street. The stranger who had driven the wood-sled past Nicholas's house was among the men. He was snow-bound over night in the village. He was a young fellow, with

innocent eyes and a hanging jaw. nudged the man next him.

"What in creation ails the fellar, any how?" said he. I seed him a-settin' on his door-step this afternoon, and the snow a-drivin' right on to him." "He aint right in his upper story," replied the man. "Somethin' went again him; his wife run off with another fellar, or somethin', an' he's cracked."

"Why don't they shet him up?" "He aint dangerons. Reckon he won't burt nobody but himself. If he wants to set out in a drivin' snow-storm, and tramp till he's tuckered out, it aint nothin' to nobody else but himself. There aint no use bringin' that kind of crazy on the town." Twouldn't cost the town much, chimed in another man. "He's worth property. Shouldn't be surprised if he was worth three thousand dollars. And there he is a-livin' on cornmeal and water." An old man in a leather-cushioned arm-chair beside the stove turned his grizzly quizzical face toward the others and cleared

his throat. They all bent forward attentively. He had a reputation for wit.
"Makes me think of old Eph Huntly and the story 'Squire Morse used to tell about him," said he. He paused impressively and they waited. Then he went on: "Seems old Eph got terribe hard up one time. One thing after another went again him. He'd

been laid up with the rheumatiz all winter; then his wife she'd been sick, an' they was 'most eat up with medicine an' doctors' bills. Then his hay crop hed failed, an' his pertaters hed rotted, an' finally, to cap the climax, his best cow died, an' the int'rest money was due on the mortgage, an' he didn't have a cent to pay it with. Well, he couldn't raise the money nohow, an' the day came when he s'posed the farm would have to go. Lawyer Holmes he held the mortgage, an' he expected to see him drive into the yard any time. Well, old Eph he jest goes out in the yard an' he ketches a nice fat crower, an' he kills him, an' picks him. Then he takes him into his wife. She was takin' on terrible cause she thought the farm hed got

to go, an', sez the: 'Sukey Ann, I want you to go an' cook this crower jest as good as you know how.' 'O Lor'!' sez she, 'I don't want no crower,' an' she boohooed right out. But old Eph he made her go an' stuff that crower, an' cook him, an' bile onions, turnips an' squash, an' all the fixins. He said he never felt so bad in his life, an' he never got to sech a desprit pitch, an' he was goin' to have a good dinner, anyhow.
Well, it so happened that Lawyer Holmes
he driv' into the yard jest as old Eph an'
his wife were settin' down to dinner, an' he see that nice baked crower an' the

raisin' the money in prospect. Then Lawyer Holmes he was mighty fond of his victuals himself, an' the upshot of it was he sot down to the table an' eat a good meal of the crower an' fixins, an' there wa'nt no mortgage foreclosed that day, an' before long Eph he managed to raise the money somehow. Now if Nicholas Gunn jest hed a leetle grain of old Eph's sense, he'd jest git better victuals the wuss he felt, an' let one kinder make up for t'other, instead of livin' on injun meal an' matches. I ruther guess I wouldn't take to no meal an' matches if my Ann Lizy left me. I'd live live jest as high as I could to keep my spirits up."

There was a burst of applause. The old

man sat winking and grinning compla-"Nicholas Gunn is a darned fool, or else he's cracked," said the store-keeper in his

Meanwhile Nicholas Gunn went home. He put his meal away in the closet; he lighted a candle with one of his matches; he read awhile in the Bible; then he went to bed. He did not sleep in the cot bed, that was too luxurious for him. He slept, rolled in a blanket, on the bare floor. Nicholas Gunn, whether his eccentricities

arose from mystical religious fervor or from his own personal sorrows, would have been revered and worshipped as a saintly ascetic among some nations; among New Englanders he met with the coarse ridicule of the loafers in a country store. Idle meditation and mortification of the flesh, except for gain, were among them irreconcilable with sanity. Nicholas would have had more prestige had he fled to the Himalayas and built himself a cell in some wild pass; however, prestige was not what he

The next morning a wind had arisen; it blew stiff and cold from the north. The snow was drifted into long waves and looked like a frozen sea. A flock of spar-rows had collected before Nicholas Gunn's door, and he stood watching them. They were searching for crumbs; this deep snow had shortened their resources wofully; all their larders were buried. There were no crumbs pefore this door; but they searched assiduously, with their feathers ruffled in the wind. Stephen Forster came up the road with his market-basket; it was all he could do to face the wind. His thin coat was buttoned tight across his narrow shoulders; his old tippet blew out. He advanced with a kind of side-ways motion, presenting his body like a wedge to the wind; he could not walk fairly against it.

When he was opposite Nicholas the sparrows flew up at his feet; he paused and shifted his basket. "Good mornin', Mr. Gunn," said he, in

Nicholas nodded. Stephen's face was ottled with purple, his pose and mouth looked shrunken, his shoes were heavy with

"If you want to go in an' set down a few minutes you can," said Nicholas.
Stephen moved forward eagerly.
"Thank ye, Mr. Gunn; I am kinder beat out an' I'd like to set a few minutes," he

He went in and sat down. The wine rushed in great gusts past the open door. Stephen began to cough. Nicholas hesitated, his face was surly, then he shut the door with a bang.

While Stephen rested himself in the up and down before it like a sentinel. He did not seem to see Stephen when he came out, but he stood before him in his track.

"I'm much obleeged, Mr. Gunn," said he. Nicholas nodded. Stephen hesitated a minute, then he went on up the road. The snow blew up around him in a dazzling cloud and almost hid him from sight.
"It's the last time I do it," muttered Nicholas.

But it was not. Every morning, storm or shine. Stephen Forster toiled painfully over the road with his market-basket, and every morning Nicholas Gunn invited him into the fireless hermitage to rest. A freezing hospitality, but he offered it, and Stephen accepted it with a fervent grati-

It grew apparently more and more necessary. Stephen crept more and more feebly over the road; he had to keep setting his oasket down. Nicholas never asked him if he were ill; he never questioned him at all, although he knew nothing about him but his name. Nicholas did not know the names even of many of the village people; he had never offered nor invited confidences. Stephen also did not volunteer any information as to his circumstances during his morning calls upon Nicholas; indeed, he was too exhausted; he merely gave his gentle and timid thanks for the hospitality. There came a night in January when the cold reached the greatest intensity of the season. The snow creaked under foot, the air was full of sparkles, there were noises like guns in the woods, for the trees were almost freezing. The moon was full, and seemed like a very fire of death, radiating cold instead of heat.

Nicholas Gunn, stern anthrocite that he was, could not sleep for the cold. He got up and paced his room. He would not kindle a fire in the stove. He swung his arms and stamped. Suddenly he heard a voice outside. It sounded almost like a child's.

"Mr. Gunn!" it cried. Nicholas stopped and listened. It came again—"Mr.—Gunn!" "Who's there?" Nicholas sung out gruffly.

"It's-me." Then Nicholas knew it was Stephen Forster. He opened the door, and Stephen stood there in the moonlight. "What are ye out for this time of night?" asked Nicholas.

Stephen chattered so that he could hardly speak. He cowered before Nicholas; the moonlight seemed to strike his little, shivering form like a broadside of icy spears.
"I'm 'fraid I'm-freezin'," he gasped "Can't ye take me in?"

"What are ye out for this time of night?" repeated Nicholas, in a rough, loud tone. "I had to. I'll tell you when I git a leetle warmer. I dunno but-I'm freezin'. Stephen's voice, indeed, sounded as if ice were forming over it, muffling it. Nicholas suddenly grasped him by one arm.
"Come in, then, if ye've got to," he

He pulled so suddenly and strongly that Stephen made a run into the house, and his heels flew up weakly. Nicholas whirled him about and seated him on his cot bed. "Now, lay down here," he ordered, "and I'll cover ye up."

Stephen obeyed, Nicholas pulled off his

boots, gave his feet a fierce rub and fixed the coverings over him with rough energy. Then he began pacing the room again. Presently he went up to the bed.

"Warmer!" Stephen's shivering seemed to shake the

Nicholas hustled a coat off a peg and put it over Stephen. Then he paced again. Stephen began to cough. Nicholas made an exclamation and stamped angrily out of the house. There was a little lean-to at the back and there was some fuel stored in it. Nicholas came back quickly with his arms full of wood. He piled it into the stove, set a match to it and put on a kettle of water. Then he dragged the cot bed, with Stephen on it, close to the stove, and begun to rub him under the bed-crothes. His face was knit savagely, but he rubbed with a tender strength.

"Warmer?" said he.
"Yes, I—be," returned Stephen, grate-The fire burned briskly; the sharp air begun to soften. Soon the kettle steamed. Nicholas got a measure of meal out of his cupboard and prepared some porridge in a little stew-pan. When it begun to boil he bent over the stove and stirred carefully. lest it should lump. When it was thick enough he dished it, salted it, and carried it to Stephen. "There, eat it," said he. "It's the best I've got; it'll warm ye some. I ain't got no spirits; never keep any in the house."

said Stephen feebly. "Eat it." Stephen raised himself and drained the bowl with convulsive gulps. Tears stood in his eyes, and he gasped when he lay back again. However, the warm porridge re-vived him. Presently he looked at Nicholas, who was putting more wood on the

"I guess I ain't-very hungry, Mr. Gunn,"

"I s'pose you think it's terrible queer that I come here this way," said he "but there wa'n't no other way. I dunno whether you know how I've been livin' or

"Well, I've been livin' with my half-sister, Mis Morrison. Mebbe you've heard of

"She keeps boarders. We ain't lived in this town mor'n three years; we moved here from Jackson. Mis Morrison's husband's dead, so she keeps boarders. She's consider'ble older'n me. I ain't never been very stout, but I used to tend in a store till I got worse. I coughed so it used to plague the customers. Then I had to give it up, and when Mis Morrison's husband died fixins all set out, an' he didn't know what to make on't. It seemed to him Eph couldn't be so dreadful bad off, she thought there'd be some chores complained. I've been down to the store to get the meat for the boarders' dinners when I could scarcely get along over the ground. But I cough so bad nights that the boarders they complain, an' Mis Morrison says I must go to-the poor-house. I heard her talkin' with the hired girl about it. She's goin' to get the selectmen to the house to-morrow mornin'. An'—I sint a-goin' to the poor-house! None of my folks have ever been there, an' I aint goin'! I'll risk it but what I can get some work to

do. I aint quite so fur gone yet. I waited till the house was still, an' then I cut. I thought if you'd take me in till mornin' I could git down to the depot an' go to Jackson before the selectmen come. I've got a little money—enough to take me to Jackson—I've been savin' of it up these three years, in case anything happened. It's some I earned tendin' store. I'm willin' to pay you for my night's lodgin'."

Nicholas nodded grimly. He had stood still, listening to the weak, high-pitched voice from the bed.

"It's in my vest pocket, in my pocket-book," said Stephen. "If you'll come here I'll give it to you and you can take what you think it's worth. I pinned the pocket up so's to be sure I didn't lose it." Stephen began fumbling at his vest Nicholas lifted a cover from the stove. "I don't want none of your money," said e. "Keep your money."
"I've got enough to pay you an' take me

"I tell ye, stop talkin' about your money.' Stephen said no more; he looked terrified The air grew warmer. Everything was quiet, except for the detonations of the frost in the forest outside, and its sharp cracks in the house-walls. Soon Stephen fell asleep, and lay breathing short and hard. Nicholas sat beside him.

It was broad daylight when Stephen aroused himself. He awoke suddenly and

completely and began to get out of bed.

"I guess it's time I was goin'," said he;

"I'm much obleeged to you, Mr. Gunn."

"You lay still." Stephen looked at him.

"You lay still," repeated Nicholas. Stephen sank back irresolutely; his timid bewildered eyes followed Nicholas, who was smoothing his hair and beard before a little looking-glass near the window. There was a good fire in the cooking stove, and the room was quite warm, although it was evidently a very cold day. The two windows were thickly coated with frost, and the room was full of dim white light. One of the windows faced toward the east, but the sun was still hidden by the trees across the road. Nicholas smoothed his hair and

his wild beard slowly and punctiliously. Stephen watched him.
"Mr. Gunn," he said, at length. "What say?" "I'm afraid-I shan't get to the depot before the train goes if I don't start pretty

Nicholas went on smoothing his beard. At length he laid his comb down and turned "Looka-here!" said he, "you might jest as well understand it. You ain't a-goin' to any depot to-day, an' you ain't a-goin' to any train, an' you ain't a-goin' to any depot tomorrow nor to any train, an' you ain't a-

goin' the next day, nor the next, nor the next, nor the next after that." 'What be I a-goin' to do?" "You are a-goin' to stay jest where you are. I've fought against your comin' as long as I could, and now you've come, an'

I've turned the corner, you are a-goin' to stay. When I've been walkin' in the teeth of my own will on one road, an' havin' all I could do to breast it, I aint a-goin' to do it on another. I've give up. an' I'm a-goin' to stay give up. You lay still." Stephen's small, anxious face on the pil-low looked almost childish. His helpless-

ness of illness seemed to produce the same expression as the helplessness of infancy. His bollow, innocent blue eyes were fixed upon Nicholas with blank inquiry. "Won't Mis Morrison be after me?" he asked, finally.

"No, she won't. Don't you worry. I'm a-goin' over to see her. You lay still." Nicholas shook his coat before he put it on; he beat his cap against the wall, then adjusted it carefully. "Now." said he, "I'm a-goin'. I've left enough wood in the stove, an' I guess it'll keep warm till I get back. shan't be gone any longer than I can help."
"Mr. Gunn!"

"What say?" "I ruther guess I'd better be a-goin'." Nicholas looked sternly at Stephen. "You lay still," he repeated. "Don't you try to get up whilst I'm gone; you ain't fit to. Don't you worry. I'm goin' to fix it all right. I'm goin' to bring you something nice for breakfast. You lay still." Stephen stared at him, his thin shoulders hitched uneasily under the coverlid. "You're goin' to lay still, ain't you?" repeated Nicholas. "Yes, I will, if you say so," replied Stephen. He sighed and smiled feebly. The truth was that this poor cot in the warm room seemed to him like a couch under the balsam-dropping cedar of Lebanon, and all at once he felt the rest of the divine

the will of another.
"Well, I do say so," returned Nicholas.
He looked at the fire again, then he went out. He turned in the doorway and nodded admonishingly at Stephen. "Mind you don't try to get up." he said, again.

Nicholas went out of sight down the road, aking long strides over the creaking snow. He was gone about half hour. When he returned his arms were full of packages, He opened the door and looked anxiously at the bed. Stephen twisted his face to-ward him and smiled. Nicholas piled the packages upon the table and lifted a stove

consolation which comes from leaning upon

"I've seen Mis Morrison and it's all right." "What did she say?" asked Stephen, in

an awed voice. "Well, she didn't say much of anything. She was fryin' griddle-cakes for the boarders' breakfasts. She said she felt real bad about lettin' you go, but she didn't see no other way, and she'd be glad to have you visit me just as long as you wanted to. She's goin' to pack up your clothes."

I ain't got many clothes. There's my old coat, an' vest, an' my other pants, but they're 'most worn out. I ain't got but one

real good shirt besides this one I've got on.
That was in the wash, or I'd brought it."
"Clothes enough," said Nicholas.
He crammed the stove with wood and began undoing the packages. There were coffee, bread and butter, some little delicate sugar cookies, some slices of ham, and

eggs. There were also a pail of milk and a new tin coffee-pot. Nicholas worked busily. He made coffee, fried the ham and eggs, and toasted slices of bread. When everything was ready he carried a bowl of water to Stephen for him to wash his hands and face before break-

fast. He even got his comb and smoothed Then he set the breakfast out on the ta ble, and brought it up to the bedside. He had placed a chair for himself, and was sitting down, when he stopped

"I don't know as it's just fair for me not to tell you a little something about myself before we really begin livin' together, said he, "It won't take but a minute. don't know but you've heard stories about me that I wa'n't quite right. Well, I am; that is, I s'pose I am. All is, I've hed lots of trouble, an' it come mainly through folks I set by; an' I figured out a way to get the better of it. I figured out that i I din't care anything for anybody shouldn't have no trouble from 'em, an' I didn't care anything for myself should't have any from myself. I 'bout made up my mind that all the trouble an' wickedness in this world come from carin' about yourself or somebody else, so I thought I'd quit it. I let folks alone, an' I wouldn't do anything for 'em; an' I let myself alone as near as I could, an' didn't do anything for myself. I kept cold when I wanted to be warm, an' warm when I wanted to be cold. I didn't eat anything I liked, an' I left things around that hurt me to see. My wife she made them wax flowers an' them gimeracks. Then I used to read the Bible cause I used to believe in it an' didn't now, an' it made me fee worse. I did about everything I could to spite myself an' get all the feelin' out of me, so I could be a little easier in my mind." Nicholas paused a moment. Stephen was looking at him with bewildered intensity. "Well, I was all wrong." Nicholas went on. "I've give it all up. I've got to go through with the whole of it, like other folks, an' I guess I've got grit enough. I've made up my mind that men's tracks cover the whole world, and there ain't standin' room outside of 'em. I've got to go with the rest. Now we'll have breakfast."

Nicholas ate heartily; it was long since he had tasted such food; even Stephen had quite an appetite. Nicholas pressed the food upon him; his face was radiant with kindness and delight. Stephen Forster, in-nocent, honest and simple-hearted, did not in the least understand him, but that did not matter. There is a higher congeniality than that of mutual understanding; there

is that of need and supply.

After breakfast Nicholas cleared away the dishes and washed them. The sun was so high then that it struck the windows, or he wouldn't have any heart for extra I could do for my board. An' I've and the frost-work sparkled like diamonds. down to the spring for more water; he saw a flock of sparrows in the bushes across the road, and stopped; then he sethis paildown noiselessly and went back for a piece of bread. He broke it and scattered the crumbs before the door, then went off a little way and stood watching. When the sparrows settled down upon the crumbs he laughed softly and went on toward the spring over the shining crust of snow. -Mary Wilkins in Harper's Bazar.

Written for the Sunday Journal.

What is so sweet as sleep— The soothing, semi-conscious sense of sinking Away from light, and toil, and weary thinking And all the woes that, waking, we must weep Sleep! sleep!

How tranquil and how deep The crystal darkness that our eyes are drinkin As down we drift, unswerving and unshrinking Into the silences that round us creep!

The waning world behind us Seems but a dream, as we are wafted through The gateways of the dark to realms that blind With slumber dripping o'er us like a dew-To isles of rest, where sorrow may not find us, Nor any soul-polluting thing pursue. -James Newton Liatthews. MASON, Ill.

Written for the Sunday Journal. Asleep at Post. Asleep at post the watcher said: This was the sentence that was read As to the men a dozen guns

Were handed; six were empty ones, The rest had messengers of lead. All soon was ended; then his head We pillowed 'neath the boughs that spreadbove where Rappahannock runs— Asleep at post

I knew how he by night had sped To watch beside a soldier's bed, His hand as soft as any nun's; I carved, "The bravest of our sons Is tenting here, where watch is fled, Asleep at post." -Alonzo Leora Rice.

Written for the Sunday Journal Sweet sleep! thy kiss upon my eyelids press Peace in thy touch, and far forgetfulness, O let me feel again thy soft caress.

In utter weariness I come to thee, Thou semblance blest! of vague eternity. O yield thyself; my tender refuge be. Upon thy tranquil bosom let me lie For one short hour, if only one, that I May dimly guess the joy it is to die!

PERU, Ind., Dec. 10, 1890. Written for the Sunday Journal. To Meredith Nicholson On this little volume of verses

With your critics I cannot agree, As each the same story rehearses, "Here a rising young poet we see." I've read it from first to last measure, Read it closely with conscience and care; I've read it with infinite pleasure-You have risen-are already there!

-Russel M. Seeds. In Old Age. How gracefully the year grows old! See, she has doffed and laid away Her draperies of red and gold

To don the garb of brown and gray. And yet, like some superb old dame. The year sweeps on; and ermine rare
Fringes her sad-toned robes, and gems,
Like diamonds, deck her snow-white hair. -Virginia B. Harrison.

BONNER'S SONS. They Are Steady and Industrious, and Have

Been Supplied with Plenty of Money. New York Commercial Advertiser. Rich men very rarely, while alive, divide their fortunes with their children. They make their wills, which are not executed antil after their death, so that their children often do not get their patrimony early enough to enjoy it, as they might have done in their youth. An exception to this rule is Robert Bonner, who, while still in his apparent prime, and much younger than his sixty odd years would indicate, gave outright several millons' worth of property to his three sons, Robert E., David and A. Alley Bonner. His gift included the Ledger, by which and through which he amassed his big fortune, and they are its absolute owners and managers, their father seldem profession than agers, their father seldom proffering them any advice as to the conduct of the singularly prosperous paper. Robert Bonner believes in allowing his sons to depend entirely on their own judgment, and to profit by their own experience as he himself has done from his boyhood, with the most beneficial results. The boys, as he calls them, have made various new departures in their journal and in their management of property, which their father frankly admits to be improvements on his method. They are very different from the mass of rich men's sons. They are very steady, industrious, capable, self-disciplined, not having been hurt a whit by the wealth of their father. He has reared them so discreetly that they are a comfort and credit to him, now that he has partly withdrawn from active busi-ness life, from the heat and burden of the day, to enjoy rationally his well-earned leisure.

Religious Sects,

Philadelphia Becord. There are not less than 146 different reli gious denominations or sects in the United States, according to the latest accounts. It used to be said that it took only a Bible, an old woman and a cat to set up a new religious denomination; and, perhaps, some of the exististing sects are not much better

endowed and equipped The Silver Cross Circle of the order King's Daughters has been incorporated by the Secretary of the State of New York. The order is formed for the purpose of owning or leasing a house or houses for the welfare of the worthy poor of the city of New York, and to furnish homes, lodgings and needed articles to such poor, either at cost price or less or gratuitously, and to line of live stock, and we lost several head by them. On one provide religious teachings and other in-struction and medical attendance for the poor, and to find employment for them.

THE IRON MAN OF MINNESOTA.

I was only a boy eight years old when my father moved into the hill country of western Minnesota. He was known to all the pioneers about as "Big Dave," and to the Indians as the "Iron man." He was six feet tall, weighed 210 pounds, and, at forty years of age, was perhaps the strongest man in the United States, and certainly one of the most fearless of men. Mother was above the average in height and weight, and, if she lacked father's strength, was not behind him in nerve and courage. She could shoot a rifle, skin a deer, set a bear trap, or paddle a canoe, and, as a famnaving seen me.

ily, we were able to take care of ourselves. We had been settled about six months when father set a trap for a bear which had been prowling around. I went out with him next day to visit the spot, and we found the bear had been caught, but that the Indians had killed him and taken both the carcass and the trap. All along the border at that time there was peace, but the red man was jealous and sulky, and whenever he could harass or damage a settler he was pretty apt to do so. Many of them had visited our cabin, but none of them knew anything about father except that he was a big man. There was an Indian village four miles away, and the fellows who got the bear showed their contempt for father by dragging the body over the snow and leaving a plain trail for him to follow.

Father was justly indignant, and we at once took up the trail for the village. I had a light shotgun, while he had a rifle, hatchet and hunting-knife. We followed the trail right into the village, and there found the meat being cut up, while the pelt and trap were near by. "Where is the thief who stole my bear?"

shouted father as we came to a halt within

four feet of the crowd around the meat. No one answered. "I say he is a thief!" continued father, "and if you will point him out to me I will pull his ears. Let that meat alone! It be-A dozen of the bucks began to growl and murmur, and father handed me his rifle, threw down his knife and hatchet, and

cried out: "There was more than one thief! I saw by the tracks in the snow that there were four. Are they squaws or men? If they are men let them lay aside their knives and come out here. I will take the four at once." This declaration was bailed with a shout and in less than a minute the four who had stolen the bear came to the front. They every Indian in the village gathered around to see the fun. Is was fully expected that he would get a good drubbing, and the four advanced with mischief in their eyes.

then the four rushed : on him from four For an instant he was hidden from sight and there was a great hurrahing, but the next thing we saw was the body of an Indian sailing in the air, and a second rolling over and over backward, and then father gave the crowd an exhibition of his strength. He grasped an Indian in each hand and played with them as easily as you can handle broomsticks. He circled them about, bumped then, together and finally gave them a fling, which rolled both of them into the ice-cold waters of the

creek. "Have you six men here?" demanded my father as he turned to the chief. "If so, let them come forward and seek to put me down. If they can accomplish it I will go home and say no more."

There was a general flutter of excitement and as the chief named six of his best men each stepped forward with a whoop. Father was smiling and confident as he spat on his hands, and he told me that I need have no fears. At a given signal the six Indians made a rush. They got hold of arms, and legs, and body, but with a mighty wrench father shook them off and then took the aggressive. There was neither striking nor kicking in the struggle, but the way he did twist those red-skins about made the crowd dizzy. It two minutes he was victor, and the chief came forward and shook his hand and then and there gave him the title of "The Man of Iron." Ever thereafter the Indians held him in the greatest awe and respect, and any one of them invited to eat at our table felt highly honored. I got a title at the same time father did. If I was scared while in the village, I was at least determined not to betray the fact, and so it happened that they dubbed me "The-Boy-Who-Stood-Fast."

In April of the next year I cut my foo while chopping and was laid up for several weeks. This was during the sugar-making season, and father and mother were necessarily in the bush a good share of the time. Our cabin had but one room below, and my bed was in a far corner. The path from the sugar bush came up at the rear of the house. On warm, pleasant day about the end of the month, and about mid-afternoon, I was aroused from a light sleep by hearing some one open the door. I lay facing it, and I saw a strange white man enter and look around. He was a rough, evil-looking man, and I knew that he was a stranger in the neighborhood. I suppose that he be-lieved us all in the bush, for he leaned his rifle against the logs and walked over to a chest in which father kept his papers and which was the storehouse for articles of personal wear which we never used.

A report had got abroad that father had brought money into the country to buy land. While this was untrue, it had found believers, and this desperado had come to rob us. I had not yet been out of bed. Father had his rifle at the sugar-camp, while my shot-gun hung on its hooks ten feet away. I could do nothing to drive the man away, and if I betrayed my presence he might kill me. I therefore lay quiet, hoping that

something might bring father up. The chest had a spring lock and the key was banging on the chimney. The stranger did not even look for it, but set about breaking open the chest with his hunting-knife. In his efforts he broke the blade square off about two inches back from the point. He was cursing, and growling, and still at work, when I heard mother's footsteps outside. I was close to the logs, and in turning the corner of the house the path led over a rocky surface. I knew she'd walk right in on the man, and I realized that he might kill her, but I suddenly be-came so weak that I could not lift a finger nor raise my voice.

The door was a bit ajar, and mother pushed it open and walked in. She had come up to dress my foot. As she entered the man rose up with a curse, and for twenty seconds the two stood looking each other in the face. Then mother suspected what sort of a fellow he was and what he was there for and she sprang at him. He had the broken hunting-knife in his hand, and I saw him lunge at her. As he did so she struck him with her open hand fair on the nose—a woman's swkward blow, but a powerful one—and he yelled right out as he went down. She had one hand in his hair and the other clutching his throat in no time, and then came bump! bump! bump! as she knocked his head on the puncheon floor. It wasn't over three minutes from the time she entered the door until she had him tied hand and foot, and it was only after that operation that she looked over to me and asked:

"Harry, are you awake?"
Well, we had the fellow snug and fast. The blow mother gave him almost smashed his nose, and he bled like a stuck pig. She choked him until he was black in the face, and it was about ten minutes before he recovered his senses. Then how he did go on! He writhed and twisted, raved and cursed, and mother had to threaten to put coals to his flesh to calm him down. She carried me to a chair, got a rest for my foot, and then left me to watch while she went after father. I sat there with my shotgun in my hands, and three different times I cocked it and made ready to fire on the fellow, who was determined not to be held. When father came up the man changed his tactics and became as humble as a dog. He tried to make us believe that he thought our cabin the home of his uncle. and that he was after a deed which his uncle was illegally holding.

Every border neighborhood made its own

laws in those days. Father called in a couple of neighbors to consult over the case, and as a result the fellow was taken out, tied to a tree, and then switched on the bare back until his roars for mercy could be heard a mile away. His weapons were retained and he was set free to take the trail for a settlement fifteen miles away. It was expected that he would return some day for revenge, but he never did.
In those early days the country was full occasion, when our pony was running loose in the woods with a bell on his neck, I went to look him up. I found him two miles

from home. Guided by the bell, I discovered him on the further side of a glade or opening, about ten rods across. I had just come to the edge of the glade, and had opened my mouth to call the pony when a panther sprang on his back from the limb of a tree. His spring almost knocked the pony down, but he was a stout little fel-low, and he got his feet and came dashing straight at me. The panther was fairly on his back, but the motion gave him enough to do to hang on. The pony dashed for a big beech with low spreading limbs, and at two jumps he was relieved of his burden and the panther rolled to the ground within four feet of me, screaming out in a way to lift my heels off the ground. I expected to be attacked, and on this occasion had no weapon with me. The beast had got more than enough, however. One of his eyes was put out, his shoulder broken, and he must have been badly bruised up. He rolled around for a while, screaming in pain and anger, and then slunk off without

It was in connection with a panther that I saw my father perform a feat which is recorded in pioneer histories. One day in October he and I were out hunting. I had lagged behind to pluck some wild grapes, and, coming to a spring on a hillside, father knelt down to quench his thirst. He was hardly down when a large male panther sprang on him from a limb about ten feet above the ground. The yell of surprise father gave reached my ears and I hastened my footsteps. I came up to find him bat-tling barehanded with the beast. I had my gun, but, for fear of killing father. was obliged to stand by as a spectator. Father had leaned his rifle against a tree, but, owing to the activity of the pather, could not reach it. He had a hunting-knife in his belt, but declared afterward that he totally forgot its presence. The panther snarled and father shouted, and they seemed to be whirling in a circle most of the time. The real situation was this: The panther aimed to spring and pull father down, but father ducked and dodged, and at every opportunity got in a kick or a blow. Had the beast remained quiet three seconds I could have put a bullet into him, but he was moving about like greased lightning. Once father caught him by the tail and flung him ten feet away, but he gathered himself up and was back before I could fire. My presence was known, and pretty soon father called out: "Don't fire! Get my gun and stand off a bit and be ready for this fellow's mate when she comes!

I carried out his order, and therefore did not see the finis of the fight. Father got the panther by the back of the neck and the tail, and carrying her to a rock thirty feet away he beat her on the stone until she was dead. The mate did not show up. The combat lasted fully ten minutes, and fathwith a knife. He had thirty-eight clawmarks on his body, each of which drew blood, but none of them was serious, and he was not laid up for even a day. "You just keep out of the way and don't get frightened," said father to me, and just

OUT OF THE ORDINARY.

The city of London, England, will build and rent houses to workingmen at a slight profit. The celebrated star Algol has a diameter

of 1,116,000 miles, or 256,000 times greater The sewing-machine is only forty-four years old. Matches have been in common use since 1829, and America's first street-car ine dates from 1826.

San Francisco is in a snowless region. The snow that fell there in January, 1883. was the first that the people had seen there for seventeen years.

Experiments made in Europe indicate that the use of the electric light causes plants to work day and night and run mainly to leaf at the expense of seeds. It would be difficult to maintain a theater at the ancient village of Williamsburg, Va., at this time. But the first theater built in the United States was in Williamsburg in

There is a preparation from the Calabar bean known to druggists and chemists as

phepostiquine. It is the most expensive

drug known. It is worth about \$1,000 an

There is a silver nugget at Silver City,

Kansas requires for the instruction of her 509,614 school children 11,612 teachers. She has 8,811 school-houses. She pays her male teachers \$42 a month and her female teachers \$34 a month.

Ida., weighing 360 pounds, which is to be exhibited at the world's fair. It is a chunk of silver glace with masses of ruby silver running through it. In hotels the life of a napkin is put down at three months, provided it is of extra good material. A sheet lasts six months, and a table-cloth depends for its existence

upon the care that is taken of it. A rapid penman can write thirty words in a minute. To do this he must draw his quill through the space of a rod-1612 feet. In forty minutes his pen travels a furiong, and in five hours and a third one mile.

E. Elwood, of Mount Morris, Mich., guessed he would die nine years hence. He was so sure of it that he had his tombstone erected and dated 1899. His prophetic vision was at fault, as he has just died. Philadelphia statistics show that fifty

women are employed to one hundred men in that city. Not so long ago the sight of a woman following any vocation in pub-lic attracted a crowd. So the world ad-According to a recently published census of Vassar College graduates it appears that of 867 young ladies, whose career after leaving the institution had been learned,

315, or a little more than 36 per cent., had married. The present wealth of the religious orders of France is computed at \$200,000,000. Ten years ago it was \$150,000,000, and at the close of Louis Phillippe's reign it was \$15,000,000. The French Chamber has decided to

them more heavily. While excavating for the foundation of a new opera-house in Atlanta, Ga., last week, workmen found a live snake "six feet below the surface." It was an ugly, poison-ous moccasin, nearly five feet long, and fought hard until killed. Alexander Bond, a colored man at Cen-

terville, Md., came near dying with excite-

ment on learning that he was entitled to

pension money amounting to \$5,730. Restoratives had to be applied before he could sign the necessary papers. Guilford, Conn., claims to have the oldest house in the United States. It was built in 1640, and is still occupied. In colonial times it did duty occasionally as a fort and was a place of refuge for settlers when

King Pullip was on the warpath. The wild cockatoos of Queensland, when plundering a corn-field, post sentinels to give an alarm. If one bird is shot the others, instead of at once taking to flight, bover screaming over their dead comrade until many of them share his fate.

A man was recently sent to prison in New York city because he could not furnish \$500 bonds to keep the peace. As there was no one to furnish it for him this was practically imprisonment for life, so after a couple of months the man was called up and discharged. A wealthy Canadian is traveling about the country with a mission. That mission

is to save shoe leather to the world. He insists that if everybody would cover three

inches more at every step the saving in boots and shoes in America alone would be \$27,000,000 per year. A man in Jackson county, Ore., has been plowing this fall with a steam engine and has found that it works quite successfully. He pulls eight plows with his engine and turns over the soil at the rate of sixteen acres per day. The cost of running the out-

fit is not over \$5 per day. Near Princeville, Crook county, Oregon, two of Mr. Ragfin's children tried to take a horse over a barb-wire fence. One of the children held the wires down, while the other rode the horse over, but one of the wires flew up, catching the girl, who was on the horse, cutting off her leg and injuring the horse severely.

The custom of throwing a slipper after a bride is said to come down from ancient times. Long before the Christian era a defeated chief would take off his shoes and hand them to the victor to show that the loser of the shoes yielded up all authority over his subjects. Therefore, when the family of a bride throw slippers after her they mean that they renounce all authority

serves to be that cream constitutes an admiral nutriment for invalids. It is superior to butter, containing more volatile oils. Persons predisposed to consumption, aged persons, or those inclined to cold extremities and feeble digestion are especially benefitted by a liberal use of sweet cream. It is far better than cod-liver oil, and besides being excellent for medical properties it is a highly nutritious food.

The fact is not so well known as it de-

READING FOR SUNDAY. The Gifts of God. When God at first made man, Having a giass of blessings standing by;

Let us (said He) pour on him all we can; Let the world's riches, which dispersed in Contract into a span. So strength first made a way; Then beauty flow'd, then wisdom, honor please.
When almost all was out. God made a stay,
Perceiving that alone, of all his treasure,
Rest in the bottom lay.

For if I should (said He)
Bestow this jewel also on my creature,
He would adore My gifts instead of Me,
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature,
So both should losers be. Yet let him keep the rest. But keep them with repining restlessness: Let him be rich and weary, that at least,

If goodness lead him not, yet wearin May toss him to My breast. -George Herbert. International Sunday-School Lesson for Jan. THE KINGDOM DIVIDED. (I Kings xii, 1-17.)

GOLDEN TEXT.-Pride goeth before destrucxvi, 18.) HOME READINGS. Mon.—The kingdom divided.... I Kings xii, 1-17

WHAT THE LESSON TEACHES.

The Independent. The first lesson of the year is about young man, brought up under the drips pings of wisdom, whose character was atrocious and whose momentous decision smacked of little less than idiocy. Why was this youth with such a promising name a fool? In the first place, he was the offspring of alienation from God. Him mother was an idolator of the worst species. Solomon encouraged her in it, and the son imbibed the viciousness of her practices and the lawlessness of her belief. Like mother, like son, is the general rule. If the boy takes his strength from the ma-ternal side, so does he draw his feebleness therefrom. The choice of a wife cannot be

overestimated in its influence upon pos-terity. Shall we be more careless than the

Greeks of the days of Lycurgus in this res

Again, unbridled luxury is enough to spoil any child. There are hundreds of children brought up as wickedly as Rehoboam was. Every luxury is theirs. Rear a child with every whim of his infantile mind gratified, and where is the chance of his becoming a wise man? One of the richest men in the country s reported to have said the other day: "The richer a man's son, the more he depends on the thorough knowledge of a trade to make him manly and independent. My son is an expert telegrapher, and his independence is worth something when he knows that he can earn his living at any moment. Every college should teach their students a trade." No of the Emperor of Germany. Each learns first to obey and then to command himself. They all will be taught a trade.

panions and preferred rather to be guided by the folly of riotous youth than be guided by the wisdom of experience. How many fine fellows are led from folly to crime by their companions; and if he is rich the more the parasites and the vaines their advice. The "bringing-up" period, then, is the most important part of a person's career. Impressions made up to seventeen years of

Then Rehoboam consulted his boon com-

age are lasting. It is before this age that nine-tenths become hopelessly and morally dwarfed or prudently expanded. There is no better New Year's resolution for parents to make than to redouble their attention to their children's education. Don't pay some one else to do it and then let it go. That is not business or affection, Children must be the first and the last care. The young can do no better than to make up their minds in moments of grave decision to trust rather their elder friends than their young and flighty ones. Otherwise, like Rehoboam, your friends may exclaim? "To your tents! Leave the fool to himself."

Topics for the Week of Prayer. The following topics are suggested for the week of prayer by the Evangelical Allie

ance for the United States: Sunday, Jan. 4—Sermone—The Glory of the Triune God. Jer. x, 6, 7; Hab. 11i, 3, 42 Il Cor. iv, 6, and xiii, 14.

Jan. 5—Confession and Thanksgiving—
For the Nation, community, church, family
and the individual. Confession, Hosea xiv, 1, 2; I John i, 8, 9; Psa. xxxii, 1-5; II Sam, xii, 13. Thanksgiving, I Thess. v, 18; Psa. c; Ps. ciii; Neh. xii, 43,

that the power of the Holy Ghost may rest upon it, Acts ii, 1-18; that the disciples of Christ may be one, John xvii, 21; that the church may gain a truer and broader con-ception of her mission, Matt. xxii, 35-39 Matt. xx, 28; John xvii, 18. Prayer that the international conference at Florence, next April, may be crowned

Jan. 6-The Church Universal .- Prayer

with special blessing. Jan. 7-Nations and Their Rulers .- Prayer for all in authority, I Tim. ii, 1, 2; for peace, Isa. ii, 4: for the abolition of the slave. opinm and strong-drink traffic, Exed. xxii, 16; Psa. lxxii, 4; for all needed reforms— temperance, Hab. ii, 15, 12; Sabbath, Neh. xiii, 15, 22; industrial, Jer. xxii, 13; social, I Cor. vi, 18, 20; political, I Sam. ii, 36, and

Jan. 8—The Church at Home.—Prayer for a sense of personal responsibility and co-operation in the evangelization of the city country and frontier, Matt. x, 5, 16; Market xiii, 34; Acts viii, 4. Jan. 9-The Church Abroad .- Prayer for increased missionary spirit, co-operation and enlargement, Joel ii, 28, 32; Eph. iv, 11,

16; Psa. lxvii.
Jan. 10-The Family.-Prayer for sons, daughters and servants; for Sunday-schools and all Christian associations; for young people, for schools, seminaries, colleges and universities, Prov. iv; Deut. vi, 4, 15; Mark x, 13, 16; Eph. vi, 1, 4.

Jan. 11—Sermons.—The manifestation of Christ in His people, John xvii, 21, 23; Col. i, 27; II Thess. i, 12; Eph. iii, 10, 21. Of General Interest. Japan has a population of 40,00,000 people. Only 30,000 of that number are Protestant Christians.

The annual report of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, N. Y., shows present membership of 1,798, a net increase of thirteen for the year. The total receipts were \$43,153.78. The Societies of Christian Endeavor are Feb. 3, 1891, throughout the United States and Carfada as Christian Endeavor day.

The Evangelical Alliance bas issued an

invitation to all Christian bodies throughout the world to join in a week of united and universal prayer at the commencement of the year, Jan. 4-11. It is said that during the past 105 years the average daily gain of the Baptist churches equals seventy-nine for every day of the entire period; and for the past ten years the reported baptisms amount to

1,256,875, an average of 344 for every day of the ten years. The Young Women's Christian Associa! tion, founded in London in 1857, now has 143 branches, with a membership of seventeen thousand. There are forty institutes. evening homes and boarding-houses where

young women from the country can be lodged and cared for at small-charge. The Ministerial Association of Albany has adopted strong resolutions against games of chance at fairs, calling on the district attorney to enforce the laws against them, and the overseers of the poor to sue, as required by law, for property involved. This action was caused by flagrant viola-

tion of law at a recent military bazar. Thoughts for the Day. A holy act strengthens the inward holi-

ness. It is a seed of life growing into more Praise is the rent we owe to God, and the larger the farm the greater should be the rent paid .- Bowes.

Mystery is but another name for our ig-norance; if we were omniscient all would be perfectly plain.-Edwards. We must never undervalue any person The workman loves not that his work should be despised in his presence. Now, God is present everywhere, and every person is His work.—De Sales.

Not alone to know, but to act according to thy knowledge is thy destination, pro-claims the voice of the inmost soul. Not for indolent contemplation and study of thyself, nor for broading over emotions of piety—no, for action was existence given thee; thy actions, and thy actions alone, de-termine thy worth.—Fichte.